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Official Records

23rd plenary meeting
Friday, 4 October 2002, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Jan Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Hidayat (Indonesia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 44 (*continued*)

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/270 and A/57/270/Corr.1)

Agenda item 10 (*continued*)

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/57/1)

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The tragic events of 11 September 2001 gave a powerful impetus to our collective efforts to combat international terrorism and, as rightly underlined by the United Nations Secretary-General in his report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, highlighted once again the vital importance of multilateral efforts in preserving international peace and stability. The Russian Federation has always believed that a strong and efficient United Nations is the key tool to collectively manage international affairs and to build a stable multi-polar world order based on the United Nations Charter and the rules of international law. In this regard, it is necessary to continue improving and strengthening the Organization, and this is one of the most important tasks to bear in mind when implementing the Millennium Declaration.

We support the Secretary-General's appeal to formalize in the United Nations agenda the Organization's reform priorities as set out in the Millennium Declaration. In his reports, the Secretary-General, with good reason, emphasizes the unique role played by the United Nations and the Security Council in international efforts to combat terrorism. The strong determination to unite efforts to oppose terrorism is seen in the activities carried out by the international anti-terrorist coalition. Russia is one of the responsible participants in this coalition. It is vitally important that the coalition follow the consolidating and coordinating lead role of the United Nations and the Security Council, according to the rules of international law, particularly Council resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1377 (2001).

We note with satisfaction that, over the past year, the Organization has made great progress in regional conflict settlement issues, such as the assistance rendered to East Timor in its acquiring independence, the provisional self-governance authorities in Kosovo, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Transitional Administration in Afghanistan. We share the United Nations Secretary-General's view of the importance of the progress made during the past year, improving peacekeeping operations and increasing the United Nations' rapid deployment capability.

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The Security Council's key role at each phase of a peacekeeping operation — from the time of authorizing such operation, to adopting its mandate, and until its completion — is clearly defined in the United Nations Charter. In this context, it is of crucial importance to prevent any attempt to overlook the Security Council's authority, particularly when it comes to deciding on the use of force on behalf of the international community.

We welcome the positive developments seen in enhancing the capabilities of Member States, the Secretariat and the United Nations system at large to plan and conduct peace-making operations. However, contemporary large-scale problems in the world's hotspots require further intensification of joint efforts at all levels — national, regional and international — to improve and provide States' assistance in peacekeeping and peace-building to the Organization. In this context, we are deeply concerned about the persistent problem of shortage in troops and logistics to conduct peacekeeping/peacemaking operations, especially on the African continent.

We share the Secretary-General's assessment of the growing role of preventive diplomacy as a reliable means of safeguarding stability in the world. The unique set of political and diplomatic tools to resolve almost every acute international problem now available to the international community should be used effectively. We support the Organization's development strategy, reaffirmed in the Secretary-General's report, aimed at the eradication of poverty, the promotion of economic growth and sustainable development.

Particular importance is attached to United Nations activity guaranteeing a more equitable distribution of globalization benefits among all countries, including through their efficient participation in the international trade system, through strengthened international financial structures and improved access to the international resources for development purposes. The Conferences in Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg have become significant milestones along the way to attaining such objectives. We also note the new quality of interaction of the United Nations with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organization (WTO) and other partners in achieving goals set up in the Millennium Declaration and decisions of global forums.

On the whole, we share the Secretary-General's opinion that, despite the complexity of the outcome of the first stage of implementation of the Millennium Declaration, the success achieved shows, nonetheless, that the given tasks are within the international community's power.

The Russian Federation will continue to work actively to implement the Millennium Summit decisions in the future on the basis of the widest possible cooperation with the United Nations. The objectives set out in the Millennium Declaration cover all of today's pressing problems and lay the basis for shaping an effective global system to meet new threats and challenges, as proposed by Mr. Igor S. Ivanov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, in his address to the General Assembly.

Today the entire world realizes the need for making cooperative efforts to overcome common threats. We have already got political experience and legal instruments for interaction, but the most important thing is that the international community have a reliable mechanism — a United Nations — that is capable of acting as a global coordinating centre with unique legitimacy, universality and potential.

We propose to adopt a resolution at this General Assembly session to encourage efficient and coordinated action aimed at responding to the challenges of the twenty-first century. The Russian delegation is putting forward a corresponding draft resolution, the essence of which is to facilitate further collective efforts to implement the Millennium Declaration, in such as way that all the objectives stipulated in it are attained on the basis of their organic interrelation and interdependence in the globalization age.

To do so, all States, the United Nations, the specialized agencies, regional organizations and the private sector, as well as civil society, should unite their efforts. We highly appreciate the Secretary-General's endeavour to promote interaction and partnership in all these areas, and we deem it important to encourage such interaction. We hope that our draft resolution will win support of the participants in this session.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Cuba.

Mr. Requeijo Gual (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): I want to express our thanks for the convening of this meeting and for the opportunity given to us by the Secretary-General to discuss his report on the work of the Organization.

On this occasion, we are trying a new way of considering this item by combining a debate with another substantive item on the agenda, the follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit. This is a complex task, because a number of reports have been published by the Secretariat on these topics, and they require profound analysis by Member States. We have very little time for this purpose.

We are now at a crucial point in the consideration of the United Nations system and how to adjust all of its institutions to enable them to deal with the realities of today's world.

The follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit provides us with a unique opportunity to begin the process of creating a just and sustainable world order. It can serve as a turning point, making it possible to stem the new, elitist order of domination that has been taking shape before our very eyes, but without our participation.

In this regard, we thank the Secretary-General for introducing his first annual report on the follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit, as contained in document A/57/270, which invites us to reflect on the future of our Organization.

The delegation of Cuba considers the follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit to provide a way of mobilizing the political will necessary to fulfil the commitments contained in the Declaration, without any need to reassert or restate those commitments.

We believe that the Millennium Declaration is basically well-balanced. Despite the various views and priorities of Member States, the Declaration has been able to provoke a largely positive response from the majority with regard to the need for its implementation. My country would like first of all to welcome the fact that the Millennium Declaration reaffirms our support for the purposes and principles of the Charter and that economic and social development objectives constitute the fundamental core of the international community's priority goals.

The prevention of armed conflict is, without doubt, a challenge that is confronting our Organization to a greater degree than ever before. Cuba believes that the strengthening of the principles and objectives of the Charter and of international law remain the basic pillars of international security: full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, the non-use of force in international relations and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

The current unjust and profoundly inequitable international order must not be superseded by one that is yet more primitive and based on a unilateral reinterpretation of the Charter and of international law. We should not, for example, seek a United Nations that contributes to the achievement of a safer world by legitimizing neo-interventionism on the pretext of humanitarian action. The security problems that we are confronting today will never be resolved through so-called preventive wars or "humanitarian" intervention, which, in addition to constituting a grave risk to the security and stability of the developing countries, place the United Nations in a position subordinate to hegemonic interests.

Intervention is a gross violation not only of sovereignty but also of international law as it relates to the use of armed force, which the Charter specifically allows as an exception only. So-called humanitarian intervention as an exception to Article 2 of the Charter — intervention that attempts to justify itself with claims of protecting and defending human rights — is unacceptable.

The political manipulation of human rights, selectivity, partiality and double standards in the imposition of narrow-minded approaches must come to an end. Absolute and one-sided concepts of democracy based on models that have nothing at all to do with the specific characteristics of the society in question cannot continue to be imposed. If we allow the advancement of ideas that would tend to give yet more power to the powerful, making it easier for them to exercise their policy of domination using our Organization for that purpose, we would be contributing directly to legitimizing the law of the jungle in the system of international relations.

Another challenge presented by the Millennium Declaration is the emphasis that the United Nations should place on resolving the true causes of conflict and the problems of poverty and underdevelopment that today affect over four fifths of humankind. The United Nations has a fundamental role to play in

mobilizing financial resources and promoting international cooperation — elements that are essential if we are to fulfil the commitments and goals of the Millennium Declaration. Without greater political will on the part of the developed countries and the reforms necessary for the participation, on an equal footing, of the developing countries in the monetary, trade and financial systems, the aspiration to achieve a better world will amount only to good intentions and will not enable the eradication of poverty and the attainment of sustainable development in the era of globalization.

Neo-liberal globalization has created a world with clear imbalances. Political, economic and technological power is concentrated in the rich countries, which account for 20 per cent of the world's population, while millions in the developing world are marginalized and continue to live in extreme poverty and to suffer from poor health. For the developing countries, the right to development is an age-old aspiration. Despite the fact that the Millennium Declaration includes the right to development among its commitments, it has been forgotten. Worse yet, some developed countries are even questioning their own commitment to bringing it about. These countries — the same ones that preach good governance and respect for human rights as a way of development — might well be asked whether the right to development is not a human right.

My delegation does not share the views expressed in the chapter of the report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration on human rights, democracy and good governance in public affairs, which imply that only civil and political rights are relevant to the exercise of democracy. Such a claim is tantamount to disregarding the importance of social, economic and cultural rights, and thus undermines the validity of the arguments contained in that chapter.

A change is needed in the international economic and political order, and the United Nations must play an essential role in bringing it about. The international monetary, economic and financial system must be reformed. There is a need for international governability to make current international economic relations transparent and allow the developing countries to be integrated into the world economy in a sustainable way, so that such countries can cease to be passive participants in the global decision-making processes. The developing countries cannot remain on the sidelines as far as the benefits of the information and communication technologies revolution are concerned.

Just two years ago, the international community committed itself in the Millennium Declaration to halting and beginning to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases by 2015. Rather than improving, however, the global situation is worsening. Today, millions are dying of AIDS and millions more are continuing to be infected by the virus. More than 80 per cent of such deaths occur in Africa, where the majority of the more than 28 million people affected by the epidemic do not have proper access either to the medication or treatment that they need in order to fight the disease, avoid other opportunistic infections and alleviate their suffering.

The developing countries, particularly those in Africa, require immediate support from the international community, since the resources available to them are insufficient. They have to allocate such resources to paying off their foreign debt instead of using them for development. Today, Africa spends four times more on debt servicing than it does on education and health combined.

Therefore, without the allocation of the needed resources and the contribution of the rich countries, it will be impossible to reverse the trend, thus aggravating these and other problems in the developing countries.

Only if the developing countries receive special and differentiated treatment; if they are guaranteed full access to markets; if the deterioration in commodity prices is halted; if their foreign debt is cancelled; if they obtain access to modern technology; if official development assistance is increased; and if they are given the necessary financial resources without interference or precondition will they be able to achieve sustainable development.

The commitment to multilateralism should lead to the exercise of shared responsibility on the part of all States in the attainment of those commitments and goals. We also firmly believe, however, nonetheless that such responsibility must be differentiated between the rich and the poor countries so that special measures may be applied that favour the developing countries. Not to do so would be to perpetuate inequality and make us unable to fulfil the desired development objectives established in the Millennium Declaration.

Mr. Zarif (Islamic Republic of Iran): I wish to begin by expressing my gratitude to the Secretary-General for producing a comprehensive and thoughtful report on the work of the Organization. This report bears witness to the extensive and unrelenting efforts made by the Secretary-General and his colleagues in the Secretariat to advance the goals of the Organization.

My delegation applauds the Secretary-General for his significant focus, both in his report and in his insightful address to this Assembly, on the constructive change that multilateralism makes possible, as well as the opportunities and solutions that it provides. We believe that such a focus is of especially great importance at this stage of international relations. We are pleased that the leadership of the United Nations has taken the lead in developing the principles and practice of multilateralism and, in so doing, proficiently lived up to the expectations of the entire international community.

Undoubtedly, a growing tendency towards unilateral action that has intensified in the past year or two lies at the origin of the ongoing uncertainty and insecurity and, if unchecked, may cause a dangerous and widening rift between those who tend to act unilaterally and the wider international community. And as such, it poses fundamental risks to the international system, in the sense that it has already given rise to conflicting conceptions of how the great public goods — security, peace, environment, health, trade, aid and so many other things — can be achieved.

Unilateral policy and behaviour are not compatible with the globalized and interconnected nature of the current international system and are thus not sustainable in the medium and long terms. A glance at the actual world reveals that, as the Secretary-General correctly states in his report,

> "no single country has the capacity to cope with the political, economic, environmental and technological challenges of an interconnected world". (*A/57/1, para. 4*)

It is obvious that the current international structure is not unipolar in the sense that one super-Power, no matter how powerful it may be, can effectively resolve important international issues alone.

It is against this background that the vision provided by the Secretary-General on the need to enhance multilateralism takes on more importance. Inasmuch as the United Nations is a universal Organization and the unilateral approach runs counter to its very existence, it is appropriate and commendable that the leadership of this Organization play a leading role in preserving and promoting cooperation and coordination at the international level.

Driven by this vision, clearly, the leadership of the Secretary-General has made a significant difference on the issues of peace and security. To the extent possible, the United Nations has done its best to live up to the expectations of the world community with regard to the challenge of terrorism in the wake of the terrorist attacks on 11 September. The Secretary-General's report refers to multi-pronged efforts undertaken by the United Nations with a view to mobilizing and harmonizing the global struggle against terrorism. In our view, the United Nations is playing its part remarkably in building on the new focus of the international community on weak or collapsed States, such as Afghanistan, and mobilizing for their reconstruction. In the case of Afghanistan, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan has played a positive role since its establishment last March as a positive example of an integrated United Nations Mission designed to address almost all aspects of the situation.

We also concur with the Secretary-General that "terrorism has political, economic, social and psychological roots" (*ibid., para. 1*). While nothing at all can justify the killing of innocent people, we believe that, unless political issues that serve as breeding grounds for terrorism are effectively addressed, unilateral military and forcible measures will be able only to cut terrorism's limbs. To address these issues more appropriately, we believe that there is a need for closer coordination between the Secretary-General and the Security Council.

As to the Palestinian question, one of the lingering political issues in the report of the Secretary-General, it is unfortunate that the Israeli regime has frustrated and finally defeated all efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General and his representatives aimed at alleviating the plight of the Palestinian people. The assertion by the Secretary-General, who has repeatedly affirmed that security cannot be achieved while no move towards the restoration of the basic rights of the Palestinian people is in sight, has fallen on deaf ears.

The proposal made last April by the Secretary-General to establish a multinational force was a courageous initiative, which, if implemented, could have had a great impact in lessening the suffering of the Palestinian people. Moreover, the effort of the Secretary-General to organize an investigation into the crimes committed during the Israeli incursion into the Jenin refugee camp — an effort that was blocked by the Israelis — is also worth recalling.

Regrettably, the Security Council has failed to act on these initiatives or to follow through on them and, in general, the Council continued in the period under review with its pattern of inability to put an end to the occupation of the Arab lands or to take any action that might improve the plight of the Palestinians. It is needless to recall that several actual vetoes or threats of veto lie at the origin of the paralysis of the Security Council on the Palestinian question. In the final analysis, the failure of the Council to enforce the implementation of its numerous resolutions risks eroding its authority.

In the area of disarmament, like the Secretary-General, we are disheartened by the low level of international cooperation in relevant multilateral forums. Regrettably, as he states in his reports, negotiations on a number of issues in the Conference on Disarmament remained deadlocked. The unilateralist tendency is having an impact, thereby rendering the task of the United Nations in conducting multilateral negotiations on strengthening the ban on weapons of mass destruction more difficult.

Moreover, an inclination towards a unilateral approach is blocking the negotiations on the protocol of the Biological Weapons Convention. As a result, in the period under review, the United Nations has been successful in achieving only some progress in implementing the Programme of Action on the illicit trade in small arms and in the increase in the number of participants in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Indeed, it is modest progress indicative of the long way yet to be travelled.

In the field of development, we concur with the view of the Secretary-General that collaboration among United Nations system, the Bretton Woods Institutions and the World Trade Organization should be continued and further augmented. Obviously, the aim of this cooperation is to achieve the internationally agreed development goals contained in the Millennium Declaration and in the outcomes of the Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and other major conferences and summits. We also agree with the Secretary-General that reinforcing the institutional capacity of the United Nations regional commissions to implement regional programmes is an important and challenging task for the United Nations. As a matter of fact, implementation is a challenge at all levels. Fortunately, the conferences in Doha, Monterey and Johannesburg have clearly defined how to address the challenge of putting the development concerns of the vast majority of countries — the developing world — at the centre of the activities of international organizations, in particular the United Nations. In the light of the outcomes of those conferences, the United Nations can and should further improve its work. To perform its leadership role, it is of crucial importance that the United Nations take concrete measures to implement the outcomes of those conferences which relate to the institutional and organizational aspects of its work. To this end, chapter X of the World Summit on Sustainable Development's Plan of Implementation — which anticipates new changes in the work of the United Nations system — and other relevant conferences should be implemented in an expeditious manner. Operationalization of those outcomes, which have the endorsement of world leaders, would enable the United Nations to succeed in the important aspect of its work: the promotion of development.

Finally, my delegation has noted the emphasis the report places on the efforts towards ensuring sound financial management, mainstreaming performance management and consolidating the reform of human resources management within the Secretariat. The findings and conclusions of various inspections, in-depth evaluations, audit activities and investigations undertaken during the past year demonstrate the importance of an intensified mechanism of accountability which is to be instilled throughout the Organization. Such a mechanism, a key element in the successful completion of the reform in human resources management, is imperative for full implementation of all mandated programmes approved by Member States. We believe that the Office of Human Resource Management should continue its central role of effectively supervising, among other things, the recruitment process to ensure that, while attracting highly qualified staff, the principle of equitable geographical distribution is respected.

including in filling vacancies in senior management positions. Strengthening the United Nations to be credible and capable of responding to the challenges emanating from the ongoing globalization process and to be relevant to all Member States entails the enhanced capacity of the Secretariat. We hope that the most recent round of reforms initiated by the Secretary-General will help the Secretariat's programme of work to better respond to the demands and concerns of Member States, particularly developing countries.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Denmark, to speak on behalf of the European Union.

Ms. Løj (Denmark): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as the European Free Trade Association country of the European Economic Area Iceland, align themselves with this statement.

The Millennium Declaration brought together in a unique manner demanding, concrete and time-bound goals on peace, security and development as well as goals related to the further strengthening of the United Nations. The comprehensive implementation of the Millennium Declaration is an overriding priority for the European Union. The reports prepared by the Secretary-General as input for the debate today underline the complexity of the challenges we face in achieving the ambitious goals set out in the Millennium Declaration two years ago. Progress towards reaching the Millennium Development Goals has been significant but mixed.

Since the adoption of the Millennium Declaration, we have made major steps towards successful implementation. In Doha, we agreed to a comprehensive development agenda with the focus on integrating the developing countries into the global economy. In Monterrey, we firmly established the partnership pact: the clear commitment by all developing countries to take primary responsibility for their own development, ensuring sound policies, good governance, democracy, human rights and rule of law. We would also like to pay tribute to the African leaders who have taken an impressive lead in this regard with the initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development. Developed countries have made a clear commitment to lend support to the development efforts. The commitments were reaffirmed at the World Food Summit in Rome last June. And the circle was completed in Johannesburg, which set additional targets for sustainable development to supplement the Millennium Development Goals, and which called for partnerships and implementation. Concrete action was called for — led by the developing countries — to promote sustainable development and eradicate poverty.

Those commitments must be followed through with perseverance. The European Union is fully committed to a comprehensive approach and to a coordinated strategy addressing the interlinkages in the efforts to promote sustainable development. Economic development, social development and environmental protection are mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development. The European Union stands ready to assist in the efforts for development at the national, regional and international levels. We are the greatest trade partners for developing countries, and with the Everything But Arms initiative, we are opening our markets for all goods from the least developed countries. European Union heads of State and Government have pledged to significantly increase our level of development assistance and to ensure implementation of the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative. I would like to reiterate those commitments today.

Also, a strengthening and enhancement of the United Nations as an organization, at the Secretariat, intergovernmental and country levels, is a prerequisite for success in implementing the Millennium Declaration and meeting the goals contained therein. The European Union is fully supportive of the Secretary General's initiative to strengthen the Organization and will do all it can to take this issue forward in the General Assembly. The Millennium Declaration should be the main basis for continued improvement of the Organization's intergovernmental structure, the Secretariat and the budget — and the programmatic process. The European Union welcomes the fact that the Secretary-General, in his capacity as chief administrative officer of the Organization, has taken important steps towards modernizing the Secretariat.

We also emphasize the need of ensuring coherence between the follow-up to the Millennium Declaration and the other major United Nations conferences and summits. We must also take a holistic approach to monitoring and evaluation. A coordinated and integrated conference follow-up is called for within the existing frameworks — both at the national level and in the United Nations. That goes both for the agenda of the General Assembly, the Second Committee, the Third Committee, the Economic and Social Council and for reporting the resolutions and follow up.

This year the Secretary-General's report on the follow up to the Millennium Declaration focuses on two topics that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency: the prevention of armed conflict and the treatment and prevention of major diseases, including HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

As for the prevention of armed conflict, the European Union warmly welcomes the extended focus and priority allocated to moving the United Nations from a culture of reaction to one of prevention. The European Union hopes that all United Nations member countries will embrace the conclusions and recommendations made in the Secretary-General's report on conflict prevention. We would support, and indeed actively participate in the implementation of all recommendations both within the United Nations as well as in other international and regional organizations and at the national level. The EU has embarked on its own programme for the prevention of armed conflict, with clear political priorities for preventive action. The EU will continue to work actively towards strengthening United Nations capacity in peace and security. The EU considers that the Brahimi report offers a unique opportunity to improve the way the international community approaches peace operations, and it will continue to contribute to the implementation of its recommendations.

The ability to provide humanitarian assistance to the millions that suffer as a consequence of conflicts all over the world is also an integral part in establishing and maintaining peace and security. There are serious gaps in the United Nations humanitarian response to the needs of the millions of internally displaced persons. To complicate things, there are still widespread attacks against humanitarian workers. Those matters need to be addressed. The protection of civilians, humanitarian workers and United Nations personnel in armed conflict is first and foremost the responsibility of the host State. But an enhanced international effort is also called for, and not least better coordination between all actors: local governments, civil society and the international community.

The international community made clear in the Millennium Declaration its commitment to assist countries hosting refugees and to promote the return of refugees and displaced persons. We support ongoing efforts to strengthen focus on finding sustainable solutions in the region of origin in the form of local integration or reintegration.

Evidence proves that there is a clear critical link between peace, security and conflict prevention and sustainable development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. That point cannot be stressed enough. The inter-linkage is unquestionable. Both sides of the problem need to be addressed. The task of achieving universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms remains daunting. Increased compliance with core human rights instruments and cooperation with human rights mechanisms are crucial in that context. But the persisting and grave violations of human rights in many parts of the world serve as a clear reminder that further international efforts are urgently needed in order to achieve universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The report of the Secretary-General highlights once again the devastating impact the HIV/AIDS pandemic has had on development in a number of developing countries, especially in the least developed countries and in sub-Saharan Africa. The EU will continue and intensify its efforts aimed at eliminating HIV/AIDS. We reaffirm the importance we attach to an enhanced and balanced approach in order to address all dimensions of the HIV/AIDS pandemic through strong and coordinated efforts covering different forms of interventions, including prevention, treatment and care.

The EU action plan on aid for poverty diseases in developing countries aims at providing a comprehensive package of interventions for the three major communicable diseases: HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. The EU member States and the European Commission have committed substantial resources to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and we continue our commitment to helping the fund establish itself as an effective mechanism for

delivery of essential support to those most in need. The EU underscores the need to implement national and sectoral policies and plans, in which universal access to reproductive health care and services, population and gender issues are integrated, with a focus on adolescents.

One issue has been at the top of the international agenda during the past year: the fight against terrorism. The EU categorically condemns terrorism, whatever its form, motivation and manifestations. But with the same resolve, the EU emphasizes that the fight against terrorism must be conducted with respect for the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms. We acknowledge the central role of the United Nations, the Security Council and its Counter-Terrorism Committee, and we urge the speedy signing and ratification of all 12 United Nations terrorism-related conventions, especially the one related to the financing of terrorism.

In conclusion, the EU believes strongly in multilateralism. We are ourselves proof of that. We can do more together than by individual actions. We welcome the commitment of the Johannesburg Summit to support the leadership role of the United Nations as the most universal and representative organization in the world. We agree with the Secretary-General when he states that the United Nations is a unique instrument available to the world for dealing with critical global problems and challenges.

The Acting President: I call on the representative of Indonesia.

Ms. Rustam (Indonesia): My delegation welcomes the annual report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization. As usual, it offers a comprehensive and succinct review of United Nations activities in the past year, indicating areas of success and failure and pointing the way forward. It is enriched and supported this year by the arrival of the first-ever report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the outcome of the United Nations Millennium Summit. We thank him for both reports.

These reports remind us of the extraordinary challenge to international security and stability in the past year, following the terrorist attacks on the United States in September 2001, barely one year after the adoption of the Millennium Declaration. The Secretary-General draws attention to the important role played by the United Nations in mobilizing international action in the global struggle against terrorism during the period, but notes that the phenomenon of terrorism has deep political, economic, social and psychological roots. We support the view that Member States have the primary responsibility to prevent the conditions within their borders that can give rise to terrorism.

In Indonesia's view, terrorism is a heinous crime. We need to combat that phenomenon and address its root causes comprehensively. However, while we fully support the resolutions adopted in the past year by the Security Council in an effort to combat terrorism, and the measures taken by Member States and regional groups, we believe that the challenge before the international community — as the Millennium Declaration makes clear — is, in effect, to make life worth living for all, so that terrorism has no hidden corners in which to sulk or breed. We must commit ourselves to lifting peoples from poverty. We believe that the international community should pay very close attention to this point and accept, as never before, that the issue of development is urgent, indeed a priority.

Unfortunately, on the subject of development and poverty eradication, the Secretary-General describes the prospects for meeting the Millennium Development Goals, one of which is reducing by half the number of people living on one dollar a day, as mixed, with progress in some parts of the world either hardly advancing or falling back dramatically. We still have 13 years to go before the target date, but as the Indonesian Minister for Foreign Affairs stressed here in the General Assembly debate last month, the war against terrorism can only be won if we emerge victorious in a more basic struggle, the one against poverty. In other words, it is not too early to remind ourselves that we cannot afford to fail.

In this connection, and in recognition of the various issues at stake, Indonesia recalls that last month the World Summit on Sustainable Development, for which we were pleased to have served as the chairman of the preparatory committee, reached an agreement on a global programme to reduce poverty and restore the integrity of our planet. If Governments, private business and civil society faithfully implement the plan of implementation that emerged, the world now has a good chance of making progress on this subject.

It is our hope that this session of the General Assembly will translate the aspirations of developing

countries, expressed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), into reality. We also share the appeals being made by other developing countries to our development partners and the international financial institutions to provide additional resources and honour the agreed targets for the official development assistance (ODA). In addition, we reiterate that for the Millennium Development Goals to be met, it is important to achieve an international trade regime where genuine multilateralism wins over unilateral practices and protectionism. We further support the initiative of the Secretary-General to establish a Millennium campaign in the United Nations to continuously place the Millennium Goals at the forefront of public consciousness throughout the world and ensure that they are the focus of action.

We believe that this same approach should be applied to the subject of conflict prevention and peacemaking. The Secretary-General notes that the focus of the implementation of the recommendations contained in his report of June 2001 on the prevention of armed conflict has been on securing greater cooperation with Governments, supporting sub-regional initiatives to promote peace and stability, and encouraging the inclusion of conflict prevention into national development programmes. We are in support of these efforts.

The General Assembly, along with other agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations, has responsibility for eliminating the root causes of conflicts, especially those relating to socio-economic development. The link between conflict prevention and sustainable development has already been established, and we call for action on short- and long-term measures. We hope that, before the close of the fifty-seventh session, consensus will be reached on the draft resolution on conflict prevention.

In this regard, it is a sad reality that the international community seems more predisposed to absorb the enormous costs of conflict than to finding the will to prevent it. If the Millennium Declaration is to have any meaning, if it is to make a resounding impression in many parts of the world, it must begin by demonstrating not just the capacity of the international community to help find ways out of bitter conflicts but rather the commitment to prevent them in the first place. In this regard, we are grateful for the recognition accorded by the Secretary-General in his report to our approach at the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to the prevention of regional conflict, an approach that focuses on economic integration and quiet dialogue.

We cannot end our comments on the subject of conflict prevention without saying a couple of things on the situation in the Middle East. The Secretary-General observed that, in the past year, the political tension was aggravated by further violence in the region. My delegation shares his view concerning the opportunities that arose during the year for progress towards a political settlement. We refer here to Security Council resolution 1397 (2002), which endorsed the prospects of a region where two States, Israel and Palestine, live side by side within secure and recognized borders, and welcomed the emergence of the Quartet to help both parties transcend the cycle of destruction.

We reiterate our call on those Member States that wield influence in the region to adopt a just and balanced approach to the issue of Palestine. They should persuade Israel to withdraw its forces from occupied territories and cease settlement activities in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions with a view to giving peace a genuine chance. In the interim, we once again stress the urgent need to deploy an international security force to protect innocent civilians in the conflict-ridden areas.

On the subject of disarmament, it is disappointing that in the past year international cooperation in multilateral forums continued to suffer. According to the report of the Secretary-General, negotiations on nuclear disarmament and a treaty on fissile materials, as well as efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space, remained deadlocked in the Conference on Disarmament. In addition, the review of the Biological Weapons Convention was suspended until November 2002, and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty has still not entered into force.

We welcome, however, the signing of the Moscow Treaty by the Presidents of the United States and the Russian Federation as a step towards reducing their deployed strategic nuclear weapons, but agree with the preference of the Secretary-General for such reductions to be made irreversible, transparent and verifiable. We reiterate our call on nuclear-weapon States to return to negotiations, and to pursue them with a serious political commitment.

Turning to humanitarian issues, we agree with the assessment of the Secretary-General that the diversity of the humanitarian challenges over the past year underlines the need to further strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations to respond, quickly and effectively, and to offer comprehensive protection to civilians facing war and natural disaster. It is disturbing to learn that the challenges of delivering assistance and mobilizing adequate resources for under-funded emergencies has not improved over previous years, and that donor responses to United Nations Consolidated Appeals remains unsatisfactory.

We note the continuing and growing use of the tool of partnerships in the work of the Organization. Indonesia is proud to be a part of these partnerships. We encourage them as they nourish human understanding and support the work of the Organization. In his report, the Secretary-General notes his visit to Indonesia in May 2002, and draws attention to the efforts being made by the United Nations funds and programmes to support the Government's pursuit of political, economic and social reforms.

The Government of Indonesia is determined to promote good governance and to establish a stable, democratic and prosperous society, and we are grateful both for the Secretary-General's visit and for the declaration of his intention to enhance the efforts of the United Nations to assist the Government of Indonesia in achieving those objectives.

While this first report of the Secretary-General explores the efforts being made to implement the Millennium Development Goals in general, it is enriched by a very useful statistical annex that tracks progress in achieving the goals through the use of a common baseline. We thank the Secretary-General for that detailed information, and we hope that it will enable Member States to keep track of yearly progress as we approach 2015.

Finally, I should like to say a word about strengthening the United Nations. We are in agreement with the Secretary-General on the tremendous changes that have taken place in the Organization since it was formed in 1945 and on the improvements that must be made if the Organization is to continue to offer the peoples of the world its best service. On this point, Indonesia would like to emphasize the need to make the revitalization of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council a reality, not just a convenient slogan. We share the view that no reform of the United Nations would be complete without enlargement of the Security Council; the more the Council is seen as representative, the more authoritative it will be. At the same time, it is important to remember that the Council's authority will be strengthened by its working methods and by its ability to respond with equal purpose and fairness to the issues brought before it. It is through the taking of concrete action that the promise of the Millennium Declaration — which is a promise to the peoples of the world and to their posterity — will be fulfilled.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mr. Cordeiro (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): The annual debate concerning the report on the activities of the Organization offers us an opportunity to reflect on the direction being taken by the United Nations and on the ways of expanding the limits of our collective capacity to respond to the challenges that confront the international community.

Thus, we see this debate as a natural continuation of the general debate, as an occasion to draw conclusions from the analysis of the world situations made by our heads of State or Government and our Ministers two weeks ago, and as an appropriate time to prepare to take decisions that reaffirm the role of the United Nations as the repository of our hopes for a more secure, freer and more just world. Let us, therefore, not look so much to the past — to the many successes and the not-infrequent failures of the Organization — but rather to the future, with a clear vision of our collective responsibility in preserving and actively promoting the principles and objectives that inspire the Organization.

Today, we face a crisis of confidence in the mechanisms and methods of multilateralism. That must be overcome. We also face profound discouragement at the practical results of our efforts in the field of cooperation for development. That, too, must be overcome. As the Secretary-General said, the choice before us is very clear: we can continue to invest our efforts in achieving peace, order and justice in the world through negotiation and the quest for consensus, or we can return to an era when conflicts of interest were resolved through other means. For us, the choice is clear: there is no turning back.

I should like to refer specifically to four points. First, there is the fight against terrorism, which requires much of our energy. The general debate threw into relief the centrality of that topic. We are all committed unconditionally to that struggle; it is our conviction. The Organization's immediate response to the terrible events of 11 September was important, along with the advances made in perfecting our instruments of cooperation. Our efforts in that area must be pursued with determination.

However, the actions that we decide to take to eradicate terrorism must be conducted strictly within the limits of international law and of respect for human rights. In addition, we must not lose sight of the underlying causes of the phenomenon of terrorism — the fact that terrorism finds fertile ground in situations of conflict, extreme poverty, social exclusion, collective humiliation and despair. To limit our struggle to repressive and security aspects would be political short-sightedness, with dramatic consequences for the very credibility of our efforts. Likewise, the security agenda must be part of — or at least must be juxtaposed with — an effective agenda of conflict settlement and cooperation for development.

That leads directly to my second point. The results of the Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg Conferences are positive in that they continue to give the proper priority to the topic of development on the international agenda. We now have a clear vision, and even a common platform, of necessary actions to confront the challenge represented by the promotion of more dignified living conditions for everyone. Nonetheless, in that regard, we believe that it is not new conferences or consensuses, but rather genuine readiness and political will, that are needed to set in motion the mechanisms that will enable us to implement the existing consensuses. That thought applies to all topics, from trade and development financing to the fight against HIV/AIDS and the promotion of sustainable development. Unfortunately, the lack of political will continues to increase, jeopardizing the consensuses that we have reached. The developing countries are individually undertaking efforts beyond their means to attain the goals agreed in the Millennium Declaration. But we have still not brought about a favourable international economic environment in which to realize those objectives. Protectionism continues its persistent trend in industrialized economies; the flow of productive investment in developing economies has declined even further; resources for development financing are clearly insufficient; official development assistance has reached its lowest levels ever; international financial institutions are not managing to respond effectively to the liquidity crisis and to speculative attacks; the funds to combat HIV/AIDS are quickly running out; some developed countries continue to boycott the Kyoto Protocol; and the Convention on Biological Diversity is unable to set in motion its mechanisms for the equitable distribution of the benefits of conservation and of sustainable use of biodiversity resources. We are experiencing an ambivalent situation, with important conceptual advances regarding the needed policies and actions, combined with an inability to put them into practice.

I turn now to the situation in the Middle East and to the problem of Iraq. With regard to the tragic situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, the absence of a political consensus on how to resume the peace process and how to find hope with security for Israelis and Palestinians has led us to intolerable inaction. It is urgent that we find a solution, and it cannot be wholly delegated to a few actors. Rather, it is a collective responsibility that rests with the United Nations and, above all, the Security Council.

It is vital that the Security Council not confine itself to rhetoric and that it fully shoulder its responsibilities, including through mechanisms that can ensure implementation of the decisions adopted.

In the case of Iraq, we reiterate that enforcement actions considered under Chapter VII of the Charter cannot be taken without the authorization and the explicit support of the Security Council. The fact that Iraq or any country can repeatedly refuse to comply with Security Council decisions is a source of serious concern and is not inconsequential to the maintenance of international peace and security.

This is a crucial time for the United Nations and for the credibility of its decisions and its working methods. Just as we are debating this topic here in the General Assembly, we would like to see the Security Council itself debate it publicly as soon as possible in order to provide a clear understanding of the individual positions of its members.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): The Pakistan delegation welcomes the Secretary-General's report on the work

of the Organization and the report on the Millennium Summit.

We could not agree more with the Secretary-General that

> "no single country has the capacity to cope with the political, economic, environmental and technological challenges of an interconnected world". (*A/57/1, para. 4*)

The United Nations is a unique instrument and a forum in which collective resources and cooperation can be deployed to address critical global problems.

Fifty-seven years ago, the United Nations was considered humankind's last best hope. It is, if anything, even more critical to humankind's aspirations for universal peace and durable security today. The purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter remain as valid as they were in 1945.

Today, the shadow of conflict hangs over the world. During the past year, tensions have escalated in two sensitive areas of the world — South Asia and the Middle East. Our region — South Asia — is once again living up to its characterization as the most dangerous place on earth. India has deployed nearly 1 million troops on our eastern border. It refuses reciprocal de-escalation; it refuses bilateral dialogue; it refuses third-party mediation. The Secretary-General's report states:

> "In South Asia, an abrupt escalation of tensions between India and Pakistan during the first half of msituation remains volatile, and an outbreak of hostilities between these two countries with nuclear-weapon capabilities has the potential to escalate with terrible consequences." (*ibid., para. 24*)

In his opening statement to the General Assembly last month, the Secretary-General urged India and Pakistan to address the underlying cause of their differences — that is, Kashmir.

The path to peace in South Asia is clear. It does not lie in recourse to fraudulent elections in Indian-occupied Kashmir, to replace one puppet by another. It requires, first, withdrawal of forces from the borders; secondly, a ceasefire along the line of control; thirdly, an end to India's State terrorism in Kashmir; and fourthly, a resumption of dialogue.

Pakistan will continue to act with restraint and responsibility. We welcome the Secretary-General's renewed offer of good offices to India and Pakistan and would be happy to accept that offer. We hope India will do likewise. We would also like to welcome the appointment by the Secretary-General of a special representative for the Kashmir dispute.

We all have welcomed the positive developments in Afghanistan and the positive role of the United Nations in this situation. But we cannot afford to become complacent. Security continues to be under threat in Afghanistan from a variety of sources, including tribal and regional rivalries. Pakistan continues to believe, and to urge, that the international community should deploy additional forces, especially in the regional centres, as a means of consolidating peace and security in Afghanistan and thereby ensuring that the writ of President Karzai runs throughout the country. To the same end, it is equally important to simultaneously commence the processes of rehabilitation and of reconstruction in Afghanistan.

Despite the Security Council resolutions adopted this year, again affirming the principle of land for peace and the creation of two States — Israel and Palestine — living side by side, the security environment in the Middle East has sharply deteriorated, as noted in the Secretary-General's report. Israel has persisted in its reoccupation and in the displacing of Palestinians, seeking to portray President Arafat in an ignominious light but, ironically, achieving the opposite. Unfortunately, peace remains ever more distant in Palestine, with the parties far apart on the structure and sequence of lasting peace in the region.

Today, the shadow of conflict hovers over the Middle East and beyond. The course of events relating to Iraq could have a significant impact on the future of international relations and of the United Nations itself. In our view, full and faithful implementation of Security Council resolutions and adherence by all to international legality are good guiding principles in this as in other international crises.

The Security Council has assumed an important role in peacekeeping and peace-building in various parts of the world. It is vital to ensure respect for the United Nations Charter. This includes implementation of Security Council resolutions, in accordance with Article 25 of the Charter.

Recent developments in South Asia, the Middle East and elsewhere have highlighted the continuing

reluctance of the United Nations fully to utilize the modalities for the peaceful resolution of disputes as set out in Chapter VI of the Charter. We hope that the Secretary-General will find it possible to activate these procedures where necessary, without the precondition of their open acceptance by all concerned parties.

Peacekeeping will remain important for the management of crises and the restoration of peace to many fractured societies across the Third World. Pakistan has historically played a major role in United Nations peacekeeping operations. We are at present the second-largest troop contributor, and we hope to continue in this role. We could do so more readily if our eastern neighbour ended its threatening deployments and agreed to mutual military de-escalation.

Pakistan notes with satisfaction the efforts made to improve United Nations peacekeeping operations in the past year or so. It welcomes the preparation of detailed standard operating procedures to streamline these operations.

In the context of discussing the role of United Nations peacekeeping operations, the Secretary-General's report has omitted any mention of the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), which has been monitoring the ceasefire line between India and Pakistan since 1949 in the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The stationing of UNMOGIP has on numerous occasions played a useful role in moderating tensions along the line of control. Pakistan would welcome a decision by the Secretary-General to enlarge UNMOGIP and to strengthen its mandate.

The United Nations role in disarmament must assume a greater salience than at present. The work being done on small arms, landmines, illicit transfers, and so forth, is important. The United Nations should not, however, abdicate its responsibilities to address the disarmament concerns that are central to the structure of international peace and security, as visualized in the United Nations Charter.

The United Nations must be able to substantially address nuclear disarmament, other weapons of mass destruction, the issue of missiles and anti-ballistic missile systems, as well as conventional disarmament, both at the global and regional levels. Apart from negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, the other relevant deliberative organs of the United Nations — that is, the Disarmament Commission and the First Committee, as well as the Disarmament secretariat — should be able to evolve the new norms and approaches required to address these central disarmament and security issues. Perhaps the convening of a fourth Special Session on Disarmament (SSOD) could provide the mechanism to do so.

The United Nations humanitarian role has been reinforced in recent crises, including the war against terrorism in Afghanistan. Apart from clear identification of objectives and parameters, in each major humanitarian operation, there is a need to streamline the command and control structures and to clearly define mandates, especially where several international agencies, bilateral donors and non-governmental organizations are involved in a humanitarian operation. It is also essential to evolve some mechanism to ensure the durability of funding for humanitarian causes, particularly when they are off the television screens and the front pages.

A conscious endeavour is needed to realize the central role of the United Nations in promoting economic and social development as envisaged in the United Nations Charter. The international conferences held in recent years reflect a United Nations consensus on economic and social issues. We must translate this consensus into action through an effective follow-up process. Pakistan has advanced some ideas to establish a follow-up and implementation mechanism that can ensure coherent, integrated and coordinated progress towards the agreed goals endorsed by the international community.

The objective of achieving peace and development in Africa has been a priority for the international community for over a decade. Pakistan supports all United Nations initiatives that could bring peace and prosperity for Africa. We have consistently supported United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa and have participated in these operations on a large scale.

We have a binding commitment to our partnership with Africa. We welcome the launching of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which we hope will open up greater opportunities for durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.

Globalization has opened enormous opportunities for development, but its benefits are uneven and unequal. It has particularly accentuated the

disadvantaged position of developing countries, especially the least developed. This is manifested in rising income inequalities, the digital divide and concentration of economic power in a few corporate hands. Developing countries have little chance of integrating themselves into the global economy, unless we can have an enabling environment in which to work. The need of the hour is an effective, comprehensive, equitable and development-oriented strategy to address the debt problem of the developing and least developed countries, including debt reduction and increased concessional financial flows.

One area that requires close intergovernmental and Secretariat review is that of human rights. It seems essential to organize the United Nations human rights mechanisms and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in a rational and effective way, including the manner of its funding and operations. We are not sure that we can advance human rights by proliferating human rights mechanisms. In this endeavour, we could draw upon the efforts made in the recent past by a working group of the Commission on Human Rights. We are confident that the new United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights will address these issues energetically and effectively.

We have welcomed the Secretary-General's second report on United Nations reform. Pakistan supports, in principle, the process of reform at the United Nations. There are a number of proposals in the report that will streamline the functioning of the Secretariat. Such proposals would receive our strong support. There are, however, a number of proposals that impact the intergovernmental processes. We believe that these will require intergovernmental discussions, especially with regard to the financial management of the Organization.

We have also taken note of the report of the Secretary-General on progress achieved by the United Nations system and Member States towards implementing the Millennium Declaration. We agree with the Secretary-General's assessment that the record of the international community in the first two years of implementing the Millennium Declaration is, at best, mixed. While some advancement has been made, the overall progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other lofty objectives has been abysmally slow. We join in the call made by the Secretary-General to evolve a coordinated strategy — one that harnesses the combined energy of Member States, international institutions and civil society — in the pursuit of the objectives of the Millennium Declaration.

Speaking here on 12 September, the President of Pakistan stated,

> "We must capture this growing spirit of global humanism to advance the quest for global prosperity and universal peace. This can be accomplished only at and by the United Nations". *(A/57/PV.2)*

That is its central purpose, the reason for the existence, of our Organization.

The President returned to the Chair.

The President: Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I should like to announce that on the morning of Monday, 7 October 2002, the General Assembly will consider the second report of the General Committee as the first item.

Now I would like to give the floor to the representative of Sri Lanka.

Mr. Mahendran (Sri Lanka): The Sri Lanka delegation is grateful to the Secretary-General for introducing his annual report on the work of the Organization and also for his first annual report on the follow-up to the Millennium Summit, which focuses on commitments made in the Millennium Declaration.

The two reports, taken together, provide us with a review of our actions in the past year and information on what is needed to move further ahead.

The Secretary-General has correctly observed that the agenda of the United Nations is vast. The United Nations agenda has many important issues. These include achieving peace and security, promoting development and eradicating poverty, all of which affect us all. International cooperation in these activities is aimed at improving the quality of life of people, wherever they may be.

Despite serious setbacks for international peace and security in some regions, the United Nations has made progress in bringing peace to other areas. The catalogue of steps taken by the Secretary-General and his staff, and the efforts they are making to achieve peace and security, are commendable. The advances made, to name a few, in East Timor, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Sierra Leone, are important

developments in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

In his report on the follow-up to the Millennium Summit, the Secretary General has underlined certain impediments for better planning and coordination of United Nations efforts for peace-building and stressed the need for increased support from Member States.

We in the international community should endeavour to make available to the Secretary-General the necessary assistance to enable him to improve the United Nations capacity to maintain peacekeeping operations, including United Nations activities in the area of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants. We wish to reiterate our support for the United Nations contribution to peacekeeping operations and to building the infrastructure of peace.

The United Nations has been at the forefront of meeting humanitarian challenges and protecting and assisting refugees and internally displaced persons. However, we note that the United Nations agencies that deal with assistance to refugees and displaced persons are facing insufficient funding. We urge the international community to consider the provision of adequate resources to the Secretary-General for those purposes.

In this context, I would like to refer to my country, where, since 5 December last, when the new Government came into office, we have been implementing an initiative to build up a peace structure in our country so as to bring to an end our long, drawn-out internal conflict. In this effort, the Secretary-General has been magnanimous. When requested, he sent a fact-finding mission and a needs-assessment mission, which he put together in little more than 24 hours. That is the type of prompt response that can go a long way in helping to strengthen the hand of the Secretary-General.

We are grateful to the newly established Inter-agency Network on Internal Displacement, which is providing targeted support to teams, not only in Sri Lanka, but in many other regions in the world — wherever there is a refugee problem.

We share the Secretary-General's view that the response to problems of internal displacement rests primarily with the affected country. But at the same time, in areas where conflict has erupted or is ongoing, it would be very difficult for such countries to find adequate resources to help in settling displaced persons in the areas where they should be. We support the Secretary-General's efforts to obtain greater resources in this area.

It is in this context that I wish to refer to your opening statement, Mr. President, in this debate on the two items under consideration. You very rightly said that we have to keep in mind that the credibility of the United Nations is based not only on its ability to articulate political goals but also, and primarily, on its ability to mobilize political will for their implementation. You never said a truer word. I think we should all remember those words. Without political will we will not achieve what we have set out to do. This is particularly true in the sphere of the Millennium Declaration.

The development goals set out in the Millennium Declaration are of the utmost importance, and achieving those goals remains a high priority. Progress has been made in some regions, but the progress made among the poorest of the poor — that is, poverty alleviation in the poorest countries — appears to be slow and marginal. The mixed results of the progress made so far in meeting the development goals paint a very gloomy picture indeed. For the poorest of the poor, who deserve immediate attention and maximum benefits in the process of achieving these goals, the window seems to be closing rather than opening. Urgent attention therefore needs to be paid to what we set out to do at the most recent international conference in South Africa.

We welcome the steps outlined by the Secretary-General to accelerate progress to reach those development goals. Coordination among and assistance to all United Nations agencies that have set out targets in this field must be our priority.

We must strengthen action within the United Nations — action on social concerns in relation to ageing, population, people with disabilities, drug abuse and transnational crime, and in relation to the technical cooperation provided to Governments for the implementation of social development programmes, including, in particular, HIV/AIDS programmes.

We are happy to see the establishment of the United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force, which is now ready to assist in such areas as integrating information and

communication technologies into national development strategies. In doing so, the United Nations goal should be to provide a major portion of the population with access to communication technology at an affordable price.

It is rather disappointing to note that there was little international cooperation this year in multilateral forums on disarmament. This has also left negotiations on a number of major disarmament issues deadlocked in the Conference on Disarmament. We urge the Conference on Disarmament to engage in constructive discussions in order to resolve the outstanding issues.

Progress in implementing the Programme of Action adopted at the 2001 United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects is noteworthy.

In this regard, we thank the Secretary-General for providing assistance to Sri Lanka by sending a fact-finding mission on the proliferation of illicit small arms. The report of the fact-finding mission is currently being studied by the authorities in Sri Lanka with a view to taking further action.

Reform of the United Nations also remains high on our agenda. We appreciate the work done by the Secretary-General in the area of United Nations reform, as well as his continued efforts in carrying out the reform process, the focus of which is to ensure that the United Nations programme of work is aligned with the priorities and principles laid out in the Millennium Declaration. Finally, we agree that the reforms should take place within the United Nations Secretariat and the General Assembly, as well as in its principal organs.

Mr. Singhara Na Ayudhaya (Thailand): Thailand is pleased with the decision of the General Assembly to take up agenda items 44 and 10 jointly, since the subject matter of these items is clearly inter-related. We believe that in order to make significant advances towards achieving the goals set out at the Millennium Summit, the work programme of the United Nations must be realigned with the priorities and principles laid out in the Millennium Declaration.

The threat to international peace and security, as well as to human security, posed by international terrorism continues to be of major concern to the international community one year after the horrifying terrorist attacks of 11 September. It is therefore fitting that the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/57/270) and the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/57/1) both highlight this important issue. On 4 October 2002, the Security Council held an open meeting in which regional groups, including the Association of South-East Asian Nations, and States reflected on what the United Nations has accomplished in the critical area of counter-terrorism in the past year. The prevailing message at the meeting was that a lot has been achieved to advance the cause of international cooperation on counter-terrorism but that still more needs to be done. The Counter-Terrorism Committee may have provided the catalyst, but, in the end, it is the actions of States in combating international terrorism and — equally as important — the assistance they receive from the international community that will make the difference.

As for Thailand, we are strengthening our laws and our cooperation with the United Nations in the fight against international terrorism, while also intensifying cooperation at the regional and subregional levels. And as the Thai Foreign Minister said in his statement to the General Assembly on 17 September

> "There is to date no indication whatsoever that there is any trace of terrorist capability in Thailand. We are making sure that no terrorist activities or networks can be harboured in our territory." (*A/57/PV.12*)

The threat posed by international terrorism makes multilateralism even more relevant. The need to enhance international support for multilateralism goes beyond the calls for the strengthening of the United Nations: it requires a reaffirmation of faith in multilateralism and in the ability of the United Nations to discharge its mandate effectively and fairly. It is thus regrettable to note in the Secretary-General's report that the increasing frequency of unilateral actions has put existing multilateral arrangements at risk. This case is most clearly seen in the area of weapons of mass destruction. As indicated in the Secretary-General's report on the work of the Organization, there was little cooperation in multilateral forums on disarmament this past year. The threat of terrorist organizations gaining access to weapons of mass destruction surely should have spurred countries to renew their commitments to multilateral agreements regarding such weapons.

However, the reality is that confidence in multilateral agreements on weapons of mass destruction is being eroded and that unilateralism could become a first, rather than a last, resort. Nevertheless, Thailand continues to have strong faith in multilateralism and confidence in the United Nations system's ability to resolve all issues affecting international peace and security and to meet other goals of the Millennium Declaration.

The promotion of international peace and security is the responsibility of all of us. In this connection, I should like to recall the Secretary-General's observation in his report on the Millennium Declaration that, in some areas of the world, there has been some progress towards peace, whereas in others, peace remains elusive. This clearly requires greater international attention and cooperation in conflict-prone areas. For our part, Thailand will continue to contribute to promoting international peace and security. In that regard, Thailand is proud and honoured to facilitate the peace negotiations between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam by serving as host to the negotiations.

However, peace and security cannot be sustained if we do not address the economic and social challenges of a particular country or region. Peacekeeping and peace-building are thus becoming increasingly symbiotic; we cannot fully have one without the other. A successful peacekeeping operation needs to be complemented by feasible and sustainable rehabilitation, reconstruction and, sometimes, a comprehensive nation-building effort. In keeping with that approach, Thailand's peacekeepers in Timor-Leste, through the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor and the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor, not only have fulfilled the traditional peacekeeping roles assigned to them but have also engaged intensively in rebuilding activities and other measures to support sustainable development. Thailand will continue to give its strong support to United Nations peacekeeping missions and hopes that all such peacekeeping missions will have adequate peace-building components.

While the international community should continue to be engaged in maintaining international peace and security and be more vigilant in the war against international terrorism through multilateral frameworks, that should not divert our attention from other equally important and pressing goals, in particular poverty eradication. During the past year, the international community has adopted three important documents that provide fresh impetus to improving the international trade and financial system and to securing greater benefits for all economies in the globalized world. The United Nations has played a pivotal role in building up the dynamism of a global partnership for development and must play a more meaningful role to ensure that the Doha Agenda, the Monterey Consensus and the Johannesburg Declaration and Plan of Implementation are implemented in a manner that truly benefits developing countries. Thailand also shares the Secretary-General's view that the right national and international economic conditions are key to achieving the Millennium Development Goals on poverty eradication.

The rapid spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic is another major threat to human security and is appropriately given attention in the Secretary-General's report. Such is the enormity of the pandemic that it could potentially reverse what we have achieved in development. The fact that over 40 million people are infected by the disease worldwide is utterly unacceptable, as well as unsustainable. Thailand is not spared by this scourge. But we have faced up to the problem and initiated various measures to deal with it in a comprehensive manner. Our success in the control and reduction of the HIV/AIDS infection rate has been widely recognized and recorded. We are proud and, indeed, grateful that the Secretary-General has referred to Thailand as one of the few countries where HIV prevalence rates have declined for several years. Although Thailand has made great strides in this area, we are fully cognizant that the threat of HIV/AIDS can never be overcome single-handedly because it is a global epidemic. So, we shall continue to cooperate at the global level. In this regard, Thailand will host the XV International AIDS Conference in 2004, with a view to addressing the multiple aspects of HIV/AIDS, namely prevention, treatment, care and support, as well as research and development.

The production and trafficking of illicit drugs remain a major concern of the international community and a major threat to human security in my country. The drug threat, when linked to other forms of transnational crime, such as money-laundering, international terrorism and illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, becomes even more dangerous. We are determined to counter the world drug problem, as

called for in the Millennium Declaration, and the Thai Government has declared an outright war on drugs. To ensure success in tackling this menace, a strong partnership must be formed domestically between governmental agencies and local communities, and through bilateral, regional and international cooperative frameworks. The expertise and financial support of the United Nations, particularly the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, are vital ingredients in this partnership. For our part, Thailand will continue to play its part in forging such a partnership. In that regard, we have initiated quadrilateral cooperation on the prevention and the suppression of the production and trafficking of drugs between China, Laos, Myanmar and Thailand, and it is anticipated that the leaders of those four countries will meet at an appropriate time to give much-needed political impetus.

Despite much progress, much remains to be done. Attainment of the Millennium Development Goals requires the existence of an enabling environment of peace, as well as a favourable economic environment and stability. We also need to ensure a fairer world economic system and a more level playing field among nations. An oasis of prosperity cannot be sustained while millions are still condemned to a life of hopelessness.

The President: I regret to have to announce that I will have to adjourn the meeting because of a lack of speakers ready to take the floor now. Yet, I would like to remind Members that the schedule for the consideration items 10 and 44 was announced weeks ago and was confirmed last Friday in the published programme of work of the General Assembly. Therefore, Member States have had, in my mind, ample time to prepare their statements. I regret to acknowledge that today we have heard only 23 speakers, 14 in the morning and 9 in the afternoon, and that there are still 43 speakers on my list. We shall continue the debate on Monday morning, 7 October 2002, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.